ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is about the use and management of turfgrass landscapes in urban and suburban environments, including home lawns, golf courses, and sports fields. Focus is on creating sustainable and attractive turfgrass landscapes through proper species selection, use of slow-release or organic fertilizer practices, and minimizing the use of pesticides and supplemental irrigation.

**Description**
Throughout the semester we will continually revisit three main themes:

1) Turfgrass plays an important role in the urban, suburban, and athletic landscape
2) Turfgrass can have a wellness impact on the urban and suburban environment
3) Proper turf management can minimize the negative impacts of turf use and maximize the positive.

**Format**
This course uses Canvas for the facilitation of communications between professor and students, posting course materials and activities, submission of assignments, and posting of grades. Canvas is part of the Learn@UIW suite of tools at UW-Madison and can be accessed at either [https://learnuw.wisc.edu/](https://learnuw.wisc.edu/) or [https://canvas.wisc.edu/](https://canvas.wisc.edu/).

**Course Instructor**
Professor Paul Koch, Ph.D.
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Email Address: plkoch@wisc.edu
Phone: 608-262-6531
Twitter: @uwpaull

**Office hours by appointment**

**Credits**
This is a 2-credit course.

**Textbook**
There is no required textbook for this course.

**Prerequisites**
None
What do I need to know to be successful?

Course Expectations

The primary goal of this class is to teach you about the role turfgrass plays in our communities and how to apply critical thinking skills to develop management strategies that minimize environmental impact. I want all students to be successful in this online course and will work hard to support your success. I have prepared online presentations, videos of interviews with professionals in the field, and selected activities to engage you in the learning process. Assignments won’t focus on memorization of facts but application of content.

You will work independently for much of the time; doing the readings, watching the lectures and videos, and preparing for online discussions and other assignments. There are also activities in which you will collaborate with other students as part of a team. Please remember this is not a self-paced course as there are assignments due every week. You should login into the course website on a regular basis to keep up to date on what your current and upcoming responsibilities are.

Course Structure & Format

This course is organized by weeks. Each week will provide you with a variety of learning experiences. You can expect the following types of activities throughout the semester: readings, videos, lectures, discussions, mini-assessments, team activities, projects, surveys, and in-person exams.

Time Commitment

This two-credit course requires approximately 4-6 hours of work per week. Please expect to spend more time for the weeks when studying for exams and finishing the larger assignments.

Contacting the Instructor

Despite this being an online class, I encourage you to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments you have about the course itself or the material presented in the course. Email is my preferred way to receive your questions, comments, or to set up an in-person appointment but I will also respond to phone and Twitter messages as soon as I am able.
**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>88-91.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-87.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>76-79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>68-75.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>64-67.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>56-63.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 56</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TIPS:**

1. Check the course site 3-4 times a week.
2. Read announcements on the course website.
3. Complete assignments by due dates specified.
4. Keep up with the weekly activities pages. Don’t get behind.
5. Create a study or assignment schedule.
6. Carve out time in your week to devote to the class.
7. Contact the instructor if you need help or have questions.

**HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?**

Various assignments will be given throughout the semester and grading rubrics will be included with most assignments to provide guidance. Assignments will be graded within 1 week and grades posted in the gradebook on the course site. Listed below is an overview of the main assignments:

- **Site Management Project:** This semester-long project will evaluate the cumulative knowledge you have gained throughout the class as it pertains to a specific site of your choosing. The project will consist of a 6 to 8 page paper due at the end of the semester and 2 earlier assignments due during week 5 and week 11.
- **WI Drought Plan:** You will submit a Powerpoint® (or similar program) presentation describing your recommendations to the state of Wisconsin for dealing with a sustained and severe drought.
- **Article Comparison:** You will critically assess popular press and scientific articles to look for strengths, weaknesses, and any inherent biases that may be present.
- **Online Discussions:** Weekly online discussion posts or responses are required and will make up 10% of your overall grade.
- **Mini-Assessment:** Short assessments will be posted throughout the semester to gauge your understanding of that week’s topic.
- **Team Activities:** You will work with your classmates to provide recommendations for two different case studies.
- **Exams:** In-person exams will occur during week 8 and week 16. The exam questions will be a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, and short essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number in Course</th>
<th>Total Course Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Management Project</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Participation</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI Drought Plan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Assessments</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Comparison</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| 1    | September 4 | Lecture 1: Introduction / Turf in the Community  
Lecture 2: History and Benefits of Turfgrass Use  
To complete by Sep 10: Turf industry survey; Syllabus mini-assessment |
| 2    | September 11 | Lecture 3: Negative Impacts of Turfgrass Use  
Lecture 4: Turfgrass Anatomy  
To complete by Sep 17: Article Comparison #1; Muddiest Point #1 |
| 3    | September 18 | Lecture 5: Proper Turfgrass Selection  
Lecture 6: Input Reduction Strategies  
To complete by Sep 24: Mini-Assessment #2 |
| 4    | September 25 | Lecture 7: Atmospheric Impacts on Turf Growth (I)  
Lecture 8: Atmospheric Impacts on Turf Growth (II)  
To complete by Oct 1: Muddiest Point #2 |
| 5    | October 2  | Lecture 9: Soil Health  
Lecture 10: Sustainable Fertilization Strategies  
To complete by Oct 8: Site Management Plan #1; Team Activity Part 1 |
| 6    | October 9  | Lecture 11: Turf Management Impacts on Drought  
Lecture 12: Drought Management of Turf  
To complete by Oct 15: Team Activity Part 2; Muddiest Point #3 |
| 7    | October 16 | Lecture 13: Sustainable Irrigation Strategies  
Lecture 14: Turfgrass and Climate Change  
To complete by Oct 22: Self assessment |
| 8    | October 23 | Midterm, Date and Time TBD  
To complete by Oct 29: First half takeaways; Muddiest Point #4 |
| 9    | October 30 | Lecture 15: Turfgrass Mowing  
Lecture 16: Turfgrass Cultivation  
To complete by Nov 5: Drought Management Plan; Mini-assessment #3 |
| 10   | November 6 | Lecture 17: Turfgrass Weed Biology  
Lecture 18: Turfgrass Weed Management  
To complete by Nov 12: Muddiest Point #5 |
| 11   | November 13 | Lecture 19: Turfgrass Insect Biology  
Lecture 20: Turfgrass Insect Management  
To complete by Nov 19: Site Mgmt Plan #2; Mini-assessment #4 |
| 12   | November 20 | Lecture 21: Pesticide Toxicology  
To complete by Nov 26: Muddiest Point #6 |
| 13   | November 27 | Lecture 22: Turfgrass Disease Biology  
Lecture 23: Turfgrass Disease Management  
To complete by Dec 3: Article Comparison #2; Mini-assessment #5 |
| 14   | December 4 | Lecture 24: Turfgrasses Around the World  
Lecture 25: Synthetic Turfgrass Use and Issues  
To complete by Dec 10: Team Activity Part 1; Muddiest Point #7 |
| 15   | December 11 | Lecture 26: Class Summary  
To complete by Dec 17: Site Management Plan #3 (Final Plan); Team Activity Part 2; Student Generated Test Questions |
| 16   | December 18 | Final Exam, Date TBD |
## WHAT ARE THE COURSE COMPONENTS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canvas Course Site</th>
<th>To support your success, the instructor will:</th>
<th>To be successful, you will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To serve as the organizational hub for all activities in the course, link to course materials and assignments, and provide tools for communication.</td>
<td>provide resources and links to course materials, post learning pages that delineate what is happening on each week, post news, and respond to student questions.</td>
<td>check Canvas regularly, keep up with weekly learning activities, and ask questions when needed.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Materials: Readings, Presentations, Videos</th>
<th>To support your success, the instructor will:</th>
<th>To be successful, you will:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To provide the foundation for learning about key turf management concepts, align with learning objectives, connect students with professionals in the field, link to popular press on important topics.</td>
<td>Provide course materials that focus on the big concepts, make connections to the field, and work through common challenges utilizing a variety of online teaching and learning formats.</td>
<td>Watch all presentations and videos, read all articles/chapters and ask questions if you do not understand a concept.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual and Class Assignments</th>
<th>To support your success, the instructor will:</th>
<th>To be successful, you will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To build upon course materials, interact as a class, and engage with key turfgrass management concepts and make connections across topics.</td>
<td>Provide directions and grading rubrics for assignments, answer questions about them, and grade fairly.</td>
<td>Submit assignments on time, participate in discussions and team activities, ask when you have a question.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exams</th>
<th>To support your success, the instructor will:</th>
<th>To be successful, you will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: To evaluate the state of your understanding of turfgrass management.</td>
<td>Provide a study exam, answer student questions, and write exams that are fair and accurately reflect the content.</td>
<td>Keep up with the weekly materials and prepare for the exam by reviewing materials and assessing knowledge utilizing self-assessments and learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Policies

Late or Missed Assignments: Notify the instructor BEFORE an assignment is due if an urgent situation arises and the assignment will not be submitted on time. Published assignment due dates (Central Standard Time-CST) are firm. Assignments turned in within 24 hours of the deadline will be assessed a 25% penalty, and assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the deadline will not be accepted. Please follow the appropriate University policies to request accommodation for religious practices or to accommodate a missed assignment due to University-sanctioned activities.

Statement on Academic Honesty: The Board of Regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the University of Wisconsin System believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin System. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others’ academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions. For more information, students are encouraged to visit the UW-Madison Dean of Students page on Academic Integrity:

http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/.

Accommodation Statement: Please let me know if you are in need of any special accommodations in the instruction or assessments in this course so that you may participate fully. I will do my best to keep any information you share confidential. Students with questions about accommodations or assessment for learning difficulties can find more information at the McBurney Resource Center: http://mcburney.wisc.edu/services/.